K. Gt. Brit. & Ireland. James I. 4.
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By the King.

A Proclamation against Pirats.

THe Kings Maieſtie, hauing bene informed through the manifolde complaints made to his Highneſſe by his owne Subiects as others, of the many depredations and Piracies committed by lewd and ill diſpoſed perſons, accuſtomed and habituated to ſpoile and rapine, inſenſible and deſperate of the perill they draw vpon themſelues, and the imputation they caſt vpon the honour of their Soueraigne ſo precious to him, as for redreſſe thereof he is inforced to reiterate and inculcate his loathing and deteſtation not onely of the crimes, but alſo to manifeſt to the world his ſinceritie and exceeding deſires for the due & ſpeedy ſuppreſſing of the delinquents; And hauing lately found by many pregnant circumſtances, that moſt of theſe great faults are continued by the conniuence, or corruption in many the ſubordinate Officers, eſpecially ſuch as are reſident in and neere the Ports and Maritime Counties: In his Princely care to preſerue Juſtice, as one of the maine pillars of his Eſtate, & for the ſpeedy preuention of ſuch fowle crimes, & the ſeuere puniſhment and extirpation of ſuch enormious offendors (moſt hatefull to his minde, and ſcandalous to his peaceable gouernment) and for the preſeruation & continuance of amitie and good correſpondencie with all other Princes and States, hath with the aduiſe of his Counſaile thought it neceſſary at this preſent, to publiſh theſe Articles & Ordinances inſuing: wherein if any ſhall be found culpable, refractory, or contemptuous, his Maieſtie is reſolued and hereby declareth, that ſuch puniſhment ſhalbe inflicted on him or them ſo offending, that others may be exemplarily forewarned, from committing ſo odious factes, and be deterred from ayding, relieuing, comforting, or abetting ſuch and ſo enormious malefactors.

IF any perſon whatſoeuer ſhall vpon the Seas, or in any Port or hauen, take any Ship that doth belong to any of his Maieſties Subiects, friends, or Allies, or ſhall take out of it by force, any goods of what nature or qualitie ſoeuer: he or they ſo offending ſhall ſuffer death, with confiſcation of lands and goods, according to the Law in that caſe prouided.

IF any perſon or perſons ſo offending, do at any time hereafter come into any Port or place of his Maieſties dominions, his Maieſtie expreſly chargeth all his Officers forthwith to apprehend him and them, and to commit them to priſon, without Baile or Mainprize, and that the name of the perſon and cauſe of his impriſonment, be forthwith certified into the Admiraltie, that ſpeedy order may be taken for further proceeding, and execution according to Law, and the contents of his Maieſties former Proclamations.

ALl his Maieſties Subiects ſhall forbeare from furniſhing, Victualing, ayding, receiuing, relieuing, comforting or abetting, any Pirate or Sea-rouer, or any perſon not being a knowen Merchant, by contracting, buying, ſelling, bartring or exchanging with him or them, vpon peril of his Maieſties heauy indignation, and the grieuous paines by Law belonging to the ſame.

ALl Admirall cauſes ſhalbe ſummarily heard by the Judge of the Admiraltie without admitting any vnneceſſary delay, and no Appeale from him ſhalbe allowed to the defendant or defendants in caſes of depredations or ſpoyle, either for the Offenders, or their acceſſaries before or after the offence commited, or thoſe in whoſe poſſeſſion the goods ſpoyled are found, vnleſſe firſt by way of prouiſion the ſumme adiudged be payd to the plaintife vpon Suerties to repay it, if the Sentence ſhalbe reuerſed. And no Prohibition in ſuch cauſes of depredation and ſpoyle, and their acceſſories and dependants ſhalbe hereafter granted againſt the Admiraltie.

NO Ship or goods taken from any his Maieſties friends, ſhalbe deliuered vpon any other order, then vpon proofe made, or certificate exhibited in the ſaid Court of the Admiraltie, to the end that a Record may be kept of all ſuch reſtitutions made to ſtrangers, to ſerue if occaſion ſhall require.